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REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action, the Examiner objects to the Abstract because the abstract contains nearly exact repetition of the language used in claim 1. In response, although Applicants know of no statutory basis for the Examiner's reason for the objection of the Abstract, the Abstract has nonetheless been amended in the interests of advancing prosecution. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the Abstract be withdrawn. A clean copy of the amended Abstract is provided on a separate sheet for the convenience of the Examiner.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejects claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In response, claim 6 has been canceled, thereby rendering the rejection thereof moot. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0020946 to Kawakami et al., (hereinafter "Kawakami") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,182,069 to Niblack et al., (hereinafter "Niblack").

In response, independent claims 1 and 18 have been amended to clarify their distinguishing features. Independent claim 19 has been canceled thereby rendering the rejection thereof moot. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the object input section is configured to enter a three-dimensional image object; the two-dimensional image

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generation section is configured to generate a two-dimensional thumbnail image, the index data creation section is configured to create index data by use of the two-dimensional thumbnail image, and the index includes the two-dimensional thumbnail image. Independent claim 18 has been similarly amended. The amendment to independent claims 1 and 18 is fully supported in the original disclosure, such as at page 4, lines 6-9 and page 8, lines 7-15 of the specification and Figure 2 of the Drawings. Thus, no new matter has been entered into the disclosure by way of the present amendment to independent claims 1 and 18.

In the automatic index making system for an electronic catalog of claims 1 and 18, specified information for a three-dimensional object is given, a two-dimensional thumbnail image is produced from the three-dimensional object on the basis of the specified information, and an index is produced by utilizing the two-dimensional thumbnail image. As discussed above, claims 1 and 18 have been amended to recite such features. In the specification of the present application, the specified information is information indicating that, e.g., a nose of a person's face can be viewed, a desk is upright, or the screen of a portable telephone faces the person. In such a manner, three-dimensional image data is input to output two-dimensional image data. Thus, according to the automatic index making system for an electronic catalog of claims 1 and 18, an index can be easily and automatically produced which incorporates a two-dimensional image generated from a three-dimensional image object.

Turning now to the prior art, Kawakami discloses a technique in which a parameter is extracted from an input two-dimensional image, and a three-dimensional mode (including a texture) of an average face is made to correspond to the two-dimensional image by using the parameter. That is, two-dimensional image data is input to output three-

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dimensional image data. Accordingly, the process disclosed in Kawakami is opposite to that recited in claims 1 and 18 (see the abstract and Fig. 1). Therefore, Kawakami is entirely different from the automatic index making system for an electronic catalog of claims 1 and 18 in both technical field and objectives. Furthermore, in Kawakami, a two-dimensional image input from a two-dimensional image input section 18 is analyzed by a parameter search section 30. However, the parameter search section 30 generates an integrated parameter mode, not a two-dimensional image (see paragraphs [0041] and [0042]). Thus, Kawakami contains no description disclosing the two-dimensional image.

Turning now to Niblack, the same discloses a technique of retrieving a video image of a database (see the abstract). In Niblack, background information and objects in representative frames of respective video images are recorded in the database. The database is searched by using an object and a background as retrieval keys. Accordingly, Niblack is also entirely different from the automatic index making system for an electronic catalog of claims 1 and 18 in both technical field and objectives. In addition, as is clear from Fig. 2 of Niblack, a data structure 40 does not contain two-dimensional image data. In such a manner, the data structure 40 of Niblack is different from the index recited in the automatic index making system for an electronic catalog of claims 1 and 18.

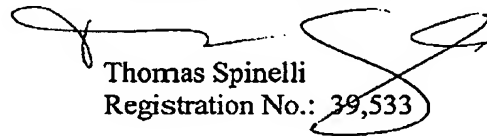
With regard to the rejection of claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Independent claims 1 and 18 are not rendered obvious by the cited references because neither the Kawakami patent application nor the Niblack patent, whether taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest an automatic index making system for an electronic catalog having the features discussed above and recited in independent claims 1 and 18. Accordingly, claims 1 and 18 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-5 and 7-

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17, being dependent upon claim 1, are thus at least allowable therewith (claims 6 and 19 being canceled). Consequently, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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TS:cm
Encl. (Clean Copy of Amended Abstract)